

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 052023Z OCT 76  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5779  
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
AMCONSUL LYON  
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE  
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE  
AMCONSUL NICE  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, FR  
SUBJECT: UDR PARLIAMENTARIANS' CONFERENCE AT ROCAMADOUR

SUMMARY. AS THEY DO EVERY YEAR, THE UDR (GAULLIST) PARLIAMENTARIANS HELD A CONFERENCE JUST BEFORE THE FALL OPENING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THIS YEAR'S, AT ROCAMADOUR IN THE LOT DEPARTMENT IN SOUTH CENTRAL FRANCE, WAS HEAVILY ATTENDED AND CLOSELY FOLLOWED BY THE PRESS. FORMER PRIME MINISTER JACQUES CHIRAC, THOUGH NOT PRESENT AT THE DEBATES, WAS VERY MUCH IN EVIDENCE IN NEARLY ALL OF THE SPEECHES PRESENTED. THE CONFERENCE WAS ESPECIALLY INTERESTING FOR THE INTRICATE RELATIONS IT REVEALED BETWEEN THE PARTY AND THE PRESS, AND BECAUSE OF THE RELATIONS THAT THE PARLIAMENTARIANS HAVE WITH ONE ANOTHER. DESPITE NEWSPAPER HEADLINES, THE UDR DEPUTIES AT ROCAMADOUR STILL SEEMED WILLING TO GIVE THE ELYSEE A CHANCE AND ALL OF THEM EXPRESSED THE SINCERE WISH THAT THE BARRE PLAN WOULD WORK AND THE CONVICTION THAT THE

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UDR WOULD REMAIN FIRMLY IN THE MAJORITY. THE US AND

GREAT BRITAIN WERE ONLY TWO FOREIGN EMBASSIES PRESENT  
AT THE MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. IN THE DRAMATIC MEDIEVAL SETTING OF ROCAMADOUR IN  
SOUTH CENTRAL FRANCE, THE PARLIAMENTARY MEETING OF THE  
UDR TOOK PLACE FROM THE 29TH OF SEPTEMBER THROUGH THE  
1ST OF OCTOBER. ALL THE GAULLIST BIG GUNS WERE PRESENT  
WITH THE SINGLE EXCEPTION OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER CHI-  
RAC, WHOSE APPEARANCE WOULD HAVE BEEN AN EMBARRASSMENT  
TO PRIME MINISTER BARRE (HE CAME ON ONE OF THE DAYS TO  
ADDRESS THE GROUP). THE PODIUM CONSISTED OF ASSEMBLY  
UDR PRESIDENT CLAUDE LABBE, ALONG WITH DEPUTIES JEAN  
FALALA, PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL YVES GUENA, SENATE UDR  
GROUP PRESIDENT PIERRE CAROUS, MINISTER OF JUSTICE OLI-  
VIER GUICHARD, FORMER PRIME MINISTER JACQUES CHABAN-  
DELMAS AND PARTY FOREIGN AFFAIRS SPECIALIST GENERAL  
AUBERT. THE DEBATE WAS OPENED BY HECTOR ROLLAND, A MAN  
HAVING THE REPUTATION OF FEROCITY IN THE PRESS, BUT WHO  
IS LITTLE MORE THAN THE PARTY WAG, ONE WHO CAN BE COUN-  
TED ON TO SAY SOMETHING OUTRAGEOUS AND MAKE EVERYBODY  
LAUGH. EXTRACTS FROM THE ADDRESSES OF CERTAIN SPEAKERS  
FOLLOW:

MICHEL DEBRE -- BARRE TREATED THE FRENCH IN HIS FIRST  
TELEVISED INTERVIEW LIKE A GAULLIST, THAT IS TO SAY, AS  
IF THEY WERE A MATURE PEOPLE....THE ATTITUDE OF THE UDR  
SHOULD BE TO UPHOLD THE FIRST STEP OF THE BARRE PLAN  
IF -- AND ONLY IF -- A SECOND STEP IS FORTHCOMING.....  
IF FRANCE GOES INTO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE UDR  
WILL DISAPPEAR AS A PARTY. THE UDR IS NOT A UNION BUT A  
FUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW, A RAS-  
SEMBLEMENT (GROUPING). I SAW THE DEATH OF THE THIRD AND  
FOURTH REPUBLICS. I DON'T WANT TO SEE THIS REPUBLIC DIE.  
MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE -- THE UDR IS A RASSEMBLEMENT  
AND WE ARE PROUD OF IT....WE WILL STAY IN THE MAJORITY  
IN ORDER THAT FRANCE MAY BE GOVERNED. THAT IS IN THE  
NATIONAL INTEREST. THE PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE OF OUR  
GERMAN PARTNER IS INCREASING BECAUSE OF ITS STRONG  
POLICIES AND FLOURISHING CURRENCY.  
OLIVIER GUICHARD -- I WILL TAKE OVER THE RUNNING OF THE  
ELECTIONS FOR THE MAJORITY IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY  
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DON'T TURN THE GOVERNMENT AWAY FROM ITS NATIONAL TASKS,  
AND IN A WAY THAT WILL SHOW TO THE FRENCH A UNITED FRONT  
WITHOUT WHICH WE CANNOT CALL THEM TOGETHER....JACQUES  
CHIRAC WILL SOON BE AMONG YOU WITH HIS CAPACITIES AND  
HIS DYNAMISM TO STRENGTHEN THE MAJORITY'S ACTIONS.  
YVES GUENA -- IF THE EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY TRIES TO TAKE  
NEW POWERS, WE SHALL FIGHT....THE UDR WILL NEVER LEAVE  
THE MAJORITY...YOU CAN ONLY MAKE AN OPENING TO THE LEFT

WITH THE FULL AGREEMENT OF ALL MAJORITY PARTNERS.

2. THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS DEPUTIES' MEETING WAS IN THE HANDS OF ANNE BRAUN, A KIND OF MOTHER-HEN OF THE UDR GROUP IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WHO ADDRESSES EVERYONE IN THE FAMILIAR FROM DEBRE AND COUVE ON DOWN TO THE MOST THICK-SKINNED PEASANT DEPUTY FROM RURAL FRANCE.

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THE FIRST DAY OF THE CONFERENCE WAS DEVOTED TO SIGHT-SEEING IN THE LOT DEPARTMENT WITH BERNARD PONS, A UDR DEPUTY FROM THE LOT ACTING AS HOST. THE PARTY AS A WHOLE WAS POLITICKING ALL THE TIME WITH PRESS, LOCAL NOTABLES, RESTAURANT OWNERS, ETC. MEALS WERE OCCASIONS FOR EXCHANGES OF OPINION ON THE VARIOUS SPEECHES GIVEN. ALTHOUGH CHIRAC WAS ON EVERYONE'S LIPS, THERE WAS NO TALK WHATSOEVER OF ADOPTING POLICIES THAT WOULD LEAD

THE UDR DEPUTIES INTO DIRECT CONFLICT WITH THE ELYSEE. THE DEPUTIES JOKED FREELY AMONG THEMSELVES AND EVEN OUTBURSTS OF ANGER ON THE PART OF SUCH PEOPLE AS HECTOR ROLLAND WERE MORE DEMONSTRATIONS OF EXPECTED BEHAVIOR THAN ANY KIND OF SINCERE WRATH AT THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING IN FRANCE.

3. PRIME MINISTER BARRE MADE HIS APPEARANCE ON THE LAST DAY OF THE CONFERENCE WITH A LONG SPEECH OUTLINING IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAREFUL TECHNICAL DETAIL HIS REASONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE MUCH-DISCUSSED PLAN. BUT BARRE HAS BECOME ENOUGH OF A POLITICIAN TO KNOW HE MUST END HIS SPEECH WITH THE RIGHT TONE. THUS HE CALLED FOR ORDER AND AUTHORITY, CITING LONG PASSAGES OF DE GAULLE'S WORKS TO SUPPORT HIS PREMISE THAT FRANCE MUST BE GOVERNED FAIRLY AND WITH AUTHORITY. BARRE WAS RECEIVED BY THE PARLIAMENTARIANS WARMLY BUT WITH NO GREAT ENTHUSIASM.

4. MOST INTERESTING OF ALL, HOWEVER, TO THE EMBASSY OBSERVER PRESENT WAS THE CURIOUS SYMBIOSIS THAT EXISTS BETWEEN THE UDR AND THE PRESS. THE PARTY CARRIED OUT A SNOWJOB IN ROCAMADOUR IF EVER THERE WAS ONE, THE HEIGHT OF WHICH WAS AN EIGHT-COURSE DINNER WHERE THE BIG WIGS HAD A GIVE-AND-TAKE WITH JOURNALISTS THAT WENT ON FOR FOUR HOURS AND COVERED A BROAD RANGE OF INTERNAL PROBLEMS. MANY OF THE REPORTERS PRESENT ADDRESS AND ARE ADDRESSED BY PEOPLE SUCH AS LABBE, GUENA AND AUBERT IN THE FAMILIAR. THE EDITOR OF THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY DAILY HUMANITE AND MICHEL DEBRE ENGAGED IN A JOKING POLEMIC THAT HAD EVERYONE PRESENT IN STITCHES. MANY OF THE DEPUTIES HAVE PET JOURNALISTS WHO INVARIABLY REPORT POLITICAL EVENTS AS IF THEY WERE A KIND OF PRESS SPOKESMAN FOR THE PERSON CONCERNED. THUS ANDRE PASSERON OF LE MONDE, FOR EXAMPLE, IS CLEARLY CONSIDERED BY ALL TO BE IN CHIRAC'S POCKET.

5. COMMENT: THE OVERALL IMPRESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARIANS MEETING IN ROCAMADOUR WAS ONE OF A PARTY IN DECLINE. "WE WANT TO BE RESPECTED, NOT ONLY BY OUR ADVERSARIES BUT MOST OF ALL BY OUR ALLIES", CRIED JEAN FALALA FROM THE PODIUM. "WE ARE A POPULAR MOVEMENT STRONGLY ENTRENCHED IN ALL SOCIAL LEVELS OF THE NATION", GOES ON BERNARD PONS, BUT METHINKS THE PARTY DOTH PROTEST TOO MUCH. THE OLD GAULLIST RHETORIC IS BEGINNING TO RING A BIT HOLLOW AND AT THIS POINT EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON CHIRAC. THE GLARING DISEQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN THE UDR'S TREMENDOUS STRENGTH IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WHERE THEY HAVE 175 DEPUTIES OUT OF 490, AND AN ELECTORATE FROM WHICH THEY

RECEIVED A SCANT 15 PERCENT OF THE NATIONAL VOTE IN LAST MARCH'S CANTONAL ELECTIONS, REMAINS. THE APPEAL IN RO-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAMADOUR FOR A RENEWAL OF THE PARTY'S LIFE BLOOD WAS FREQUENTLY HEARD, BUT THE AGE OF THE AVERAGE UDR DEPUTY IS OLDER THAN THAT OF HIS INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN COUNTERPART, AND THE PARTY SEEMS TO BE GROPING FOR A POLICY THAT WILL BE ABLE TO MARRY THE BEST OF CLASSIC UDR THEORIES WITH NEW INTERPRETATIONS. THE ANNOUNCEMENT DURING THE CONFERENCE OF CHIRAC'S CALL FOR SPECIAL ASSIZES (PARIS 28786) WAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY GREETED BY ALL THE DEPUTIES PRESENT, BUT ONE MUST LOOK FOR THE RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL ASSIZES, WHICH WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE AT THE END OF NOVEMBER, BEFORE WE CAN DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT THE UDR IS REALLY OFF TO A NEW START.

6. NEWSPAPER REPORTING, BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER THE CONFERENCE, WAS OFF THE MARK. THERE WAS NO SPLIT BETWEEN THE CHABANISTS AND THE CHIRACISTS, NOR WAS THE MEETING A "DECLARATION OF WAR ON THE ELYSEE" AS LE MONDE PUT IT. THE UDR MEETING DID, HOWEVER, COMPLETELY ECLIPSE A CONCURRENT INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN DEPUTIES MEETING THAT WAS TAKING PLACE IN PARIS; AND IN THE WAKE OF ROCAMADOUR THE IR MUST BE ASKING ITSELF NERVOUSLY WHETHER OR NOT CHIRAC WILL SUCCEED IN WOOING YOUNG MILITANTS INTO THE PARTY, A TACTIC THAT -- IN THE MAJORITY -- HAS BEEN ASCRIBED HERETOFORE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO THE IR.  
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